

FY2020 LHHS Appropriations: Status

Updated February 24, 2020

On December 20, 2019, the President signed into law the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-94). This law contains full-year FY2020 appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) in Division A. The FY2020 LHHS annual appropriations total [more than \\$1 trillion](#), when accounting for both [mandatory and discretionary funding](#). Previously, FY2020 LHHS funding had been provided on a temporary basis by two continuing resolutions (P.L. 116-59, P.L. 116-69).

Scope of the Bill

The LHHS bill provides the annually appropriated [budget authority](#) for the programs, activities, and administration of the [Department of Labor](#), the [Department of Health and Human Services](#) (except for the Food and Drug Administration, the Indian Health Service, and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, which are funded in other appropriations bills), the [Department of Education](#), and more than a dozen related agencies, including the [Social Security Administration](#) and the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#).

The LHHS bill historically is the largest of the 12 annual appropriations bills, when accounting for both mandatory and discretionary funding. In general, mandatory funding represents [just over 80%](#) of the total budget authority in the LHHS bill, supporting [annually appropriated entitlements](#) such as [Medicaid](#) and [Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\)](#). Discretionary funds account for less than 20% of total funds in the bill, but tend to receive the most attention throughout the LHHS appropriations process. This is because the appropriations process controls the amounts provided for these programs, whereas the appropriations process generally has little control over the amounts provided for appropriated entitlements. For programs with appropriated mandatory funding, the authorizing statute controls the program parameters (e.g., eligibility rules, benefit levels) that entitle certain recipients to payments.

While discretionary appropriations represent a relatively small share of the entire LHHS bill, the bill itself is typically the largest single source of nondefense discretionary funding for the federal government. (The [Department of Defense bill](#) is the largest single source of discretionary funding overall.)

FY2020 Congressional Action on LHHS

FY2020 LHHS appropriations were enacted as Division A of H.R. 1865, a legislative package that contained seven other appropriations acts. The final version of the measure was agreed to by the House

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(297-120) on December 17 and by the Senate (71-23) on December 19. The bill was signed into law on December 20 (P.L. 116-94, see also the [explanatory statement](#)).

Earlier House Action

The House completed initial consideration of annual FY2020 LHHS appropriations in summer 2019.

On June 19, the House passed (226-203) the FY2020 LHHS bill as Division A of H.R. 2740. The House adopted 64 of the 73 LHHS floor amendments offered. This omnibus was the first FY2020 appropriations measure to be passed by the House on initial floor consideration.

LHHS was also the first FY2020 bill to have been [marked up](#) by the House Appropriations Committee (on May 8). At that markup, the committee [considered 17 amendments](#), [adopting 6](#), and ordered the bill reported by a vote of 30-23. The bill was reported to the House (H.R. 2740, H.Rept. 116-62) on May 15. The full committee markup followed [subcommittee approval](#) of the bill, by voice vote, on April 30.

Earlier Senate Action

The Senate did not complete committee or initial floor consideration of annual FY2020 LHHS appropriations. The Senate Appropriations Committee majority released a [draft bill](#) and [draft committee report](#) on September 18, but no subcommittee or full committee markup was held. Also on September 18, the Senate voted not to invoke cloture (51-44) on the motion to proceed to the House-passed FY2020 LHHS omnibus (H.R. 2740). Cloture was not invoked a second time (51-41) on October 31.

FY2020 LHHS Discretionary Funding Levels

Table 1 compares proposed and enacted FY2020 LHHS discretionary appropriations with FY2019 enacted amounts. The table displays [current-year budget authority](#) subject to discretionary spending limits (*regular appropriations*) as well as a funding total that includes the [upward adjustments](#) to the spending limits as allowed under the [Budget Control Act](#), as amended (*adjusted appropriations*). In the case of LHHS, such adjustments may occur for *program integrity* and *emergency requirements* funding.

The FY2020 discretionary spending limits were most recently revised by the [Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019](#) (BBA 2019, P.L. 116-37), which was enacted after the House completed initial consideration of its LHHS measure, but before the Senate Appropriations Committee majority released its draft measure. The BBA 2019 set the overall FY2020 nondefense spending limit at \$621.5 billion, an increase of \$24.5 billion (+4%) relative to FY2019.

The FY2020 LHHS omnibus increased discretionary LHHS regular appropriations by \$4.5 billion (+2%) from FY2019. The House-passed LHHS bill would have increased FY2020 LHHS regular appropriations by \$11.8 billion (+7%), whereas the Senate majority draft would have kept that appropriation level virtually the same as FY2019 (+0%).

Table I. FY2020 Proposed and Enacted LHHS Discretionary Appropriations

Current-year discretionary budget authority subject to spending limits (\$ in billions)

	FY2019 Enacted	FY2020 House Initial Passage	FY2020 Senate Appropriations Committee Majority Draft	FY2020 Enacted
Regular Appropriations	\$178.076	\$189.876	\$178.299	\$183.042
Adjustments:				
Program Integrity	\$1.897	\$1.842	\$1.842	\$1.842
Emergency Requirements	\$3.493	—	—	\$0.210
Adjusted Appropriations	\$183.466	\$191.718	\$180.141	\$185.094

Source: Table prepared using [Congressional Budget Office](#) estimates for FY2019 enacted, FY2020 House initial passage, and FY2020 enacted. The FY2020 Senate majority estimate is from p. 7 of the [draft committee report](#) released in September 2019.

Notes: Regular appropriations reflect current-year discretionary budget authority subject to spending limits. Adjusted appropriations include discretionary funds for which special rules apply with regard to the spending limits, including certain funds for program integrity activities and provided as emergency requirements. Totals exclude funds provided under authorities in the 21st Century Cures Act (P.L. 114-255) that are effectively exempt from the spending limits.

Additional Resources

For more information on the status of FY2020 appropriations, see the CRS Appropriations Status Table. CRS reports addressing key funding questions for the programs and agencies funded by the LHHS bill are available on the CRS website. For further assistance, congressional clients may contact the [relevant CRS expert](#).

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